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ABSTRACT

The purpose of these guidelines is to assist local school districts in Texas to adequately assume the legal responsibility for planning, implementing, and evaluating inservice teacher education programs. (JD)

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Texas Education Agency

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Austin, Texas
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- STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
- STATE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION
- STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

May 25, 1979

TO THE ADMINISTRATOR ADDRESSED:

As originally adopted in October of 1976, staff development continues to be one of the priority concerns of the State Board of Education. A long-range goal of the Board is that by 1982, school districts in Texas will be conducting staff development and inservice education programs which satisfy general guidelines specified in A Guide to Better Inservice Education in Texas. This is being provided to assist you in formulating your staff development plans. The brochure incorporates recommendations received throughout the year from the field. School districts are encouraged to utilize the guidelines and recommendations to improve inservice education.

Inservice education is a process whose importance cannot be overemphasized; therefore, it is important to provide meaningful learning activities designed to improve the performance of school staffs. The information which appears in the brochure is to provide guidance and direction in planning quality inservice programs.

Very truly yours,

M. L. Brockette

M. L. Brockette
Commissioner of Education

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A GUIDE TO BETTER INSERVICE EDUCATION IN TEXAS

Texas Education Agency

CHECKLIST FOR INSERVICE EDUCATION

- ☐ School district plans a minimum of five days of inservice education and not more than three days preparation.
- ☐ Planning for inservice education should include as a minimum the elements of the Inservice Education Plan on page 4
- ☐ Participants are included in the planning process.
- ☐ A school day of seven hours is suggested as the inservice day, with a total of 35 hours planned for each individual.
- ☐ Inservice education is scheduled between June 1 - May 31.
- ☐ Audit record-keeping system for all inservice days has been established.
- ☐ Each school district involved in cooperative inservice efforts submits an inservice education plan.
- ☐ A copy of the inservice education plan is furnished to the Department of Professional Development and Instructional Services by August 1.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR INQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT:

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A GUIDE TO BETTER INSERVICE

Purpose of Inservice Education Guidelines

The purpose of inservice education guidelines is to promote the continuing improvement of educational opportunities for all children and youth in Texas by improving the performance of school personnel on the job, and to assist local districts to assume more adequately the legal responsibility for planning, implementing, and evaluating inservice education programs.

Legal Basis for Inservice Education

According to Section 16.052 of the Texas Education Code, "each school district must provide for not less than 175 days of instruction for students and not less than. . . eight days of inservice training and preparation for teachers for each school year. . ." (exceptions are cited in a subsequent subsection). In addition, Section 16.055 states that "the days of inservice training and preparation required herein shall be conducted by local boards of education under rules and regulations established by the State Board of Education that are consistent with the state accreditation standards for program planning, preparation, and improvement." Section 16.055 also charges the Texas Education Agency with the responsibility for assisting local districts in developing effective and improved programs of education. Providing direction for inservice education is an integral part of the state education agency's role in providing for the continuing education of public school personnel.

State Board of Education Actions

In September, 1976, the Board adopted staff development as one of the statewide education priorities. The goal of the Board is that by 1982, 80 percent of Texas school districts will be operating staff development programs which satisfy general guidelines developed through interactions among personnel representing school districts, regional centers, educators in colleges and universities, and the Texas Education Agency.

On January 13, 1979, the State Board of Education approved the current policy and administrative procedure concerning inservice education.

State Board Policy 64.02

State Board of Education Policy 64.02 governing the school year states that:

- Each school district shall provide "not less than eight days of inservice training and preparation for teachers for each school year."
- Inservice education is defined as a planned program of learning opportunities afforded staff members of school districts and related agencies for purposes of improving performance in already held or assigned positions.
- School districts shall operate an inservice training program based upon a written plan. A copy of the plan shall be filed with the Texas Education Agency by August 1 of each year.

Administrative Procedure 64.02

General Provisions

Not more than three of the required eight days may be used as preparation days. The school district may, at its discretion, count as part of the days allowed for inservice training those instructional workshops planned by or sponsored by regional education service centers, the Texas Education Agency, or institutions of higher education. Not more than one day of professional association meetings may be counted as an inservice day. None of the inservice days may be used to conduct the business of professional associations. Participants shall include professional and paraprofessional personnel, excepting clerical aides.

Definitions

(1) Essential provisions of inservice education include the following:

(A) Learning opportunities are afforded;
(B) Purposes are defined and related to improving performance;
(C) Activities address assigned jobs or positions which are designated; and
(D) Planned activities provide assurance of accountability for predetermined outcomes.

(2) Characteristics of inservice education activities

The definition of inservice education permits and, in turn, restricts certain operations. Acceptable inservice operations shall include the following:

(A) Any planned activity that is engaged in primarily to produce new and/or improved performances in job assignments;
(B) Activities planned which lead to degrees or certification, provided that such credentials are secondary or incidental rather than the primary purposes;
(C) Activities planned as part of the local program regardless of time, place or persons involved;
(D) The production of curriculum material which has a primary objective of training for use on the job;
(E) Training activities directed toward changes in job assignments, role expectations, and responsibilities;
(F) Evaluation activities which have as a primary objective improved performance in job assignments; and
(G) Communication activities which have as a primary objective dissemination of information among staff members and orientation of new staff.

(3) Limitations on inservice education activities

Activities which do not fall within the scope of the definition for inservice education shall include the following:

(A) Formal preparation programs directed toward new certification, advanced degrees, or specialized training for future positions rather than for improvement of performance on the current job assignment;
(B) Incidental activities from which learning may be derived but is not explicitly planned for; and
(C) Routine activities offering no specific training opportunities for improved performance in already held or assigned positions.

The Inservice Education Plan

The local inservice education planning document shall include the following elements:

(1) Needs assessment

- (A) Needs of staff members are identified;
- (B) Program needs are identified; and
- (C) Priorities are assigned.

(2) Program

- (A) Goals and objectives are listed;
- (B) Activities are planned and described;
- (C) Individuals and groups to be served are identified; and
- (D) Materials and other resources to be utilized are described.

(3) Schedule—The schedule shows how the ISE days relate to other staff development activities which may be planned (summer conferences, etc.). The plan shall include preparation (workdays) as well as inservice training days.

(4) Management—The plan shows the management process (management of records of assignment, attendance, data needed for evaluation, the budget, etc.)

(5) Evaluation

- (A) Procedures for evaluating outcomes as provided; and
- (B) An evaluation report for the prior year's inservice education program is described.

(6) Attachments—Needs assessment instruments, evaluation documents, and other planning materials may be appended.

A copy of the plan shall be filed with the Department of Professional Development and Instructional Services by August 1 of each year.

Definition of Inservice Education

Staff development, often associated with inservice education, is defined as a broad array of school operations such as manpower planning, staffing, organizational activities, and graduate education. Inservice education (ISE), one aspect of staff development, is defined as a

> planned program of learning opportunities afforded staff members of school districts and related agencies for purposes of improving performance in already held or assigned positions.

Guidelines for Inservice Education

- Each school district has the responsibility for providing inservice education based upon a written plan. A copy of the plan should be sent to the Department of Professional Development and Instructional Services, Texas Education Agency. Basic provisions of the plan include:
  - needs assessment;
  - program goals and objectives;
  - schedule;
  - management plan;
  - description of activities; and
  - evaluation.
- The staff for which inservice education is planned should include certified and other instructional personnel. Paraprofessional personnel, excepting clerical aides, are also included in the inservice education program.
- The local school district should establish a procedure for involvement which represents both planners and participants in the planning and conducting of inservice educati- -ctivities.
- A school district staff member should be provided . less than 35 hours of inservice training during a given year (- 1 - May 31).
- The school district's responsibility is further detailed by Principle 7 of the Principles, Standards, and Procedures for the Accreditation of School Districts. Principle 7 calls for school districts to operate a staff development program which begins with a careful assessment of the professional performance of

staff members. This assessment leads to identification of "discrepancies between teaching skills possessed and teaching skills required to achieve adopted student learning objectives." Discrepancies identified through this assessment become the basis for designing appropriate staff development activities. The effectiveness of such activities is evaluated in terms of the degree to which they bring about improvement in teaching skills.

- School districts are encouraged to relate ISE Plans and Five Year Priorities Plan for Accreditation. The school district inservice education plan will necessarily include and yet extend beyond the objectives and staff needs addressed in the Five Year Priorities Plan for Accreditation.

- School districts that release personnel for ISE activities during a regularly paid instructional day may not also count this time for the five ISE days.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PLANNING INSERVICE EDUCATION

Guiding principles affecting the development and implementation of inservice education programs have been identified and are listed below.

Process and Involvement

Staff members are more likely to benefit from ISE when:

- Activities are linked to a districtwide effort;
- Activities are based on identified needs;
- Activity objectives are specified;
- Activities are chosen by participants;
- Staff are involved on the planning/conducting team;
- Planning represents shared interests of schools, colleges, service centers, and related agencies;

- Responsibility for coordination is delegated to staff personnel with both time and expertise; and
- Staff perception of needs is utilized as well as other sources of individual and program needs.

General Curriculum Pattern and Setting

Inservice education programs are more likely to accomplish their objectives when:

- Activities are differentiated for participants;
- Participants are actively rather than passively involved;
- Program content concerns immediate interests and needs rather than learning for later use;
- Participants are encouraged to interact with each other; and
- Activities are conducted in the school setting near the classroom environment.

Content and Evaluation

Inservice education is likely to be more meaningful when:

- Training reflects individuals' professional performance goals;
- Training reflects a staff member's multiple roles as presenter, evaluator, guidance person, program planner, etc.;
- Activities concentrate on improving performance on the job;
- Training emphasizes improving participants' effectiveness in the present position;
- Training emphasizes renewal or retraining as well as basic training;

- Evaluation is used to develop programs rather than just to "gather" data; and
- Effectiveness of an ISE activity is measured by change in teacher behavior rather than change in pupil behavior.

Inservice Education Cooperatives

School districts may wish to join together in forming an Inservice Education Cooperative with other schools and the regional education service center. To assist in planning, the following suggestions are made:

- In early spring organize a planning meeting of administrators of all cooperating schools to coordinate next year's school calendars.
- Establish an ISE Planning Committee, including at least one administrator and teacher from each school district along with the ESC coordinator.
- Assess and determine needs of staff members.
- Plan other meetings to decide dates, ISE content, consultants, locations, and responsibilities.
- Each school district submit ISE plan to Department of Professional Development and Instructional Services by August 1.
- Initiate and carry out ISE plans.
- Each school district evaluate ISE programs along with ISE cooperative evaluation. Use evaluations in ISE planning for next year.

Supplemental Design for Inservice Education

The superintendent and the planning committee may wish to consider alternative delivery systems for supplementing inservice education programs.

One such alternative is the time-equivalency program. A time-equivalency program is defined as an array of inservice education opportunities, either long or short term, scheduled on time

outside of regular school hours. School districts that approve participants attending such hours on their own time may count this as "equivalency," and substitute this time for regularly scheduled inservice days. Approved inservice activities occurring previous to the regular contract year may be substituted only for designated inservice days during employment in the regular school year.

Audit Records

In order to account for the inservice days, the following procedures are recommended:

- The school district's calendar should show days scheduled for inservice and workdays.
- There should be teacher time records or other records to show attendance during inservice days.
- The inservice training plan should be on file in the school district.
- Lists of presenters and participants should show dates, time, and places. Sufficient detail as to the reasons for and/or types of inservice should appear with such lists, and this should conform to the inservice plan.
- If paid outside consultants are engaged to make inservice presentations, documents such as contracts, billings, and payment records should be available and identifiable in the accounting systems. Social security numbers of outside consultants should be included in documentation for Federal income tax purposes.